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Flyway

Fall 2008

MEMORIAL WEEKEND NATURE GET-A-WAY ADVENTURE

A nest of Bald Eagles filled the spotting scope frame. The group ooohhed and ahhed as a parent bird flew in quite close with prey in its talons to feed the large babies. It was Memorial Weekend and the Detroit Audubon Society was back at its annual nature get-a-way weekend at Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat center. Over 50 people, some families with young children, were having their annual family get-together. Some new friends to our group scoured sand dunes, woods, ponds, lakes and rivers in the fun filled 3 and a half day event.

The weekend started off on Friday night with Board members, Rosemarie Attilio and Jim Bull, signing up folks for nature hikes, activities and showing a PowerPoint

presentation of all the fantastic natural areas in the Hale/Tawas area that people could visit.

Our first hike, a perpetual favorite of the weekend, was led Saturday morning by birding expert, Karl Overman. Many bird species were seen, including warblers, orioles, whimbrel and more. Other people decided to take a guided tour of the historical Tawas lighthouse. Many were enthralled to view the park, the birds and beautiful scenery from the very top of the lighthouse.

After a picnic lunch, some people decided to head back to camp to enjoy kayaking or hiking around Loon Lake, and yes, it does have nesting loons, whose plaintive calls can be heard in the early misty morning hours or at dusk echoing over the water.

Rosemarie Attilio and Jim Bull led a group to the Lumberman's Monument, where some tested their strength rolling logs with antique logging tools. Others tried their hand at the giant saws, cutting a souvenir piece of white pine and marking the log with the logging brand. There was a small museum which enlightened us on Michigan's lumbering history. Lumberman's Monument also sported a huge blowout embankment where logs once were rolled into the river. Many children attempted to run down this colossal sand dune without ending up head-over-heels and were rewarded by a cool plunge in the river after their efforts.



DAS Members holding their first snake
- photo by Rosemarie Attilio

After Lumberman's we headed to the nearby largo Springs natural area, which boasts over 300 stairs down into a series of wooden walkways that take you through a breathtaking view of natural springs, wildflowers, plants and birds. A Bald Eagle flew over the group as we walked the deck. Others of the group chose to stay up top on the viewing platform and take in the vista without having to suffer the return trip up the stairs.

Saturday evening, Rosemarie Attilio gave a presentation - Birds, Bugs and Books of the Amazon Rain Forest. Rosemarie discussed her recent trip to the Amazon jungle to deliver school supplies to children in the Peruvian Amazon Rainforest. The trip was co-sponsored by the Detroit Zoological Society, and CONAPAC, the Civil Association for Conservation of the Peruvian Amazon Environment. The purpose was both to bring school supplies to children in the remote areas of the jungle and to

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Flyway

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Advertising rates are available by contacting the DAS office.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DAS TURNS 70!!

Next year Detroit Audubon will mark its 70th anniversary! We want to make it a special time and we want our members to help us celebrate. DAS began in 1939 with a group of nature enthusiasts and bird watchers. Two of them, Ed and Ann Boyes were very much involved in bird song recording and wildlife movies. They ran a series of wildlife programs at the Detroit News auditorium in Detroit for many years. This was followed by DAS sponsoring the Wildlife File Series at Rackham Auditorium and later in Royal Oak for over 20 years.

Our offices went from the Boyes' home, to 7 MI. Rd. to three different places in Royal Oak and now to the little nook we occupy in Southfield. We have had several different Office Managers starting with Louisa Butler, Carol Dick and currently Bev Stevenson. Our Board of Directors has ranged from as many as 36 members to the present 14, some of whom have been on the board starting in 1970 and there have been over 30 different presidents.

Detroit Audubon has sponsored birding field trips and nature and conservation member programs for many years, has booths in various home shows and other environmental organization shows such as Clinton River Watershed Council, Hawkfest and Detroit Zoo Earth day and Shiver on the River on Belle Isle.

We have been involved since the 70's with many environmental causes and issues. The Bottle Bill is a DAS legacy. The Michigan Kirtland Warbler recovery program, conservation easements, the St. Clair Woods Sanctuary and many others are ways DAS has been leading conservation efforts in Michigan. We were instrumental in banning the practice of fishing for tuna by targeting pods of dolphin with giant purse seines when we called for a Tuna Boycott. The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 incorporated strict controls and inspections on this practice.

Detroit Audubon and others fought against the Detroit incinerator by joining a suit to block it and to control the release of particulates from the smokestack. That suit was expensive but led to the use of scrubber technology to reduce effluents. We are hopeful that, with Detroit deciding not to buy back the incinerator next year when its contract ends, it will soon be shut down.

In the last year, DAS has initiated the Safe Passage Great Lakes project to curtail bird mortality due to collisions with tall buildings and towers. The Important Bird Areas program we currently support will document, establish and help protect areas in the state where significant bird populations can be found

As members of such an active organization, what do you want to do to celebrate the 70th anniversary? It is a rich history and there is much more to be done. Send me your suggestions by October 1st and we can start planning. Thanks for your support.

For the Latest News and Views from Detroit Audubon

be sure to frequently visit our website:
detroitaudubon.org

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AUDUBON BOOK

The University of Pittsburgh has digitized and mounted (online) one of the rare, complete sets of John James Audubon's *Birds of America*.
<http://digital.library.pitt.edu/a/audubon/>

SAFE PASSAGE GREAT LAKES

Jackson Audubon Society, a chapter of Michigan Audubon, has obtained agreement from 13 buildings in the city of Jackson to participate in the Safe Passage program. These buildings will be honored by our partners at Michigan Audubon and will be added to the Safe Passage Honor Roll. Congratulations to Jackson Audubon for this outstanding effort!

A list of contacts from cities who have lights out programs or are working on starting one in their communities has been compiled by the DAS Safe Passage Committee. These cities are now communicating with each other and exchanging news and ideas on a regular basis. Lights Out programs such as Safe Passage and similar efforts aimed at saving energy (Sierra Club's Cool Cities) and reducing light pollution for Observatories (Dark Skies Initiatives) are encouraging signs for

multiple environmental reasons and are bringing diverse organizations together to cooperate for a common good.

Look for an article on Lights Out programs around the country in a future issue of *Audubon Magazine*. Both *National Audubon* and the *American Bird Conservancy*, as well as the USFWS, are promoting efforts to deal with the problems faced by migrating birds.

In February, a federal appeals court judge chided the Federal Communications Commission for approving thousands of communications towers along the Gulf Coast without regard for their impact on migratory birds. The decision came in response to a suit brought by Earthjustice on behalf of the American Bird Conservancy and the Forest Conservation Council. The problem first attracted notice in 1998 after 10,000 Lapland Longspurs hit a 420 foot TV Tower in Kansas and died. The case arose because of concerns along the Gulf Coast, where thousands of communications towers dot the

1,000 mile stretch between Pt. Isabel, Texas and Tampa Bay, Florida. The decision will have national implications as the FCC is forced to revisit its tower approval process. (Thanks to *In Brief* and Earthjustice for this item).

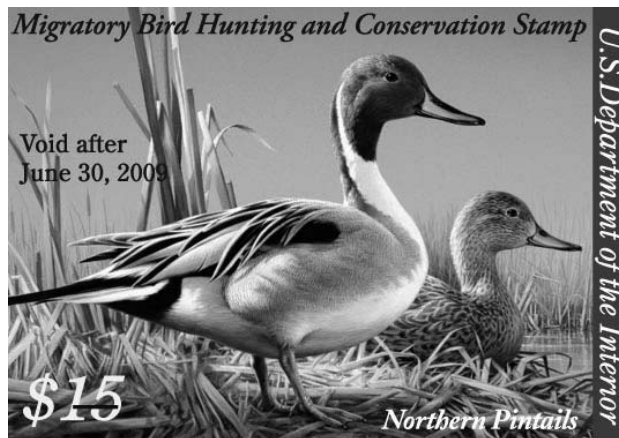
Representatives of DAS and Michigan Audubon will be meeting in July to review progress in our joint effort and to plan for the coming year as we move forward with meeting the challenges that still lie ahead of us. The fall migration will be underway with the early departure of shorebirds by the time you receive this publication and we are still in need of volunteers to spread the word, to help with the monitoring of both compliance with the program and identification and counting of the birds who do not survive their passage over our communities. If you are willing to help with this effort, please contact us at (248) 354 4960 (Tuesday - Thursday) or by e-mail to jfcharbo@juno.com. We may not need your services immediately but we would like to have your information when the need arises.

THE FLYWAY ONLINE?

Are you one of our members looking to reduce the amount of mail you receive and the amount of paper you have to recycle? Are you also interested in saving DAS postage costs - over \$1.40/year currently? If so, send us an email message and we will add you to a FLYWAY notice list and stop mailing the FLYWAY to you. We will be posting it as both text and as a pdf on our DAS website, www.detroitaudubon.org for those who like reading on their computer. We will send a message the day the FLYWAY is ready to print.

Send email to: detas@bignet.net; put "FLYWAY Online" as the subject. We will confirm receiving it.

2008-2009 DUCK STAMP



As you know, The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issues a stamp every year for duck hunters and fishers to purchase in order to hunt and fish in a National Wildlife Sanctuary (NWS). Hunters must wear the stamp while on NWS property. The \$15.00 fee is used to maintain and expand sanctuaries. Although the stamp is mostly purchased by sportsmen, it is available to everyone. If you want to support the NWS system, buy this year's stamp. It is a good way to help keep the NWS system functioning to support stopover and breeding areas for not just migrating ducks and geese but a myriad of other aquatic and many non-aquatic species as well.

You can buy online or by mail at www.duckstamp.com or use their locator to find a store in the area.

AN AMAZON ADVENTURE

The Adopt-a-School Program in the Peruvian Amazon Jungle

By Rosemarie Attilio

This past April, I had the opportunity to embark on an amazing journey to the Peruvian Amazon Jungle. As a Detroit Audubon Board member and volunteer at the Detroit Zoo, I am concerned about environmental issues globally, so I jumped at the chance to go. The trip was co-sponsored by the Detroit Zoological Society and CONAPAC, the Civil Association for Conservation of the Peruvian Amazon Environment. Back in 1993, the CONAPAC group in Peru began the Adopt-A-School and Environmental Education programs. These programs began working to bring school supplies to the rural areas of Amazonia in order to teach children environmental and conservation ideas. They began collecting funds from around the world to buy books and other school supplies that the children did not have in their villages. Volunteers then signed up to deliver these supplies. The Detroit Zoological Society has been a long-standing supporter of this project, a collection site for the donations, and signing up many of the volunteers to deliver them. I was one of those lucky volunteers.

The trip began at the end of April, when the Amazon is beginning to reach its highest level, permitting easier travel to the villages. The Amazon River can rise up to 40 feet! It has an amazing, fast moving current, strong enough to pull down trees (which I witnessed) in its journey to the Atlantic from its origins high in the Andes Mountains. We visited the people in the Peruvian Amazon. The journey this year involved 16 volunteers from the U.S., 11 teachers and representatives from the Iquitos Board of Education, guides and staff of Explorama Lodge. We visited 77 villages and over 4000



Children from the Amazon Rainforest Adopt-A-School program

- photo by Beverley Len

children. One of the main purposes was to bring education to rural children in the Amazon and to empower them with the ability to read and write. This will assist them to understand environmental concerns and changes in their village and region. This will also enable them to maintain a sustainable lifestyle in an ever-changing world.

The Amazon Jungle faces many environmental threats. In Brazil and other parts of the Amazon there are many problems: illegal logging, clearing of the forest through slash and burn soybean cultivation and cattle grazing. It is estimated that an area the size of Texas has already been cleared. Through education, the children will learn what is happening in the larger Amazon basin. They will also learn why the Amazon is so important in global climate change and why botanical diversity is so crucial to modern medicine.

So what did our trip entail? Our group split up in 5 boats that visited 3-4 villages per day. The reception we received in the villages we visited was heartwarming. Entire villages would

turn out to greet us and receive our gifts. I won't forget the shy smiles of the children as we handed them books or the look of surprise on the toddlers when we arrived with giant colorful balls and toys. We would experience unfamiliar music and dancing, as well as, amazing fresh fruits, vegetables and chocolate in its raw state as cacao. There were monkeys on the monkey island, a refuge for orphaned baby monkeys, that stole your cacao and scampered away high up in the treetops.

The jungle was amazing. Words cannot describe the smells of the jungle, the sight of pink dolphins rising from the river unexpectedly, the sea of green stretching along the shoreline, and the small pygmy marmosets darting in the trees. The jungle is a myriad of sensations such as the bright red tail of the red tailed boa, the scarlet macaw; and the shocking cobalt blue of the Morpho butterfly. We were greeted by a giant capybara at our doorstep, seeking cracker handouts. We witnessed parrot flocks over a sunrise, viewed giant lily pads and saw strange, nighttime, insects and lizards by

kerosene lamplight. We heard the call of the Smoky jungle frog from the dark nighttime waters. We were fortunate to see the strange Wattled Curasow bird dashing down the trail, a baby sloth peeking through the trees in sloooowww motion, a baby tapir trotting down the trail to say 'hello' and a baby anteater greedily licking ants from an ant nest. It was wonderful to be able walk on the canopy walkway, one of the largest canopy walks in the world.

We also visited the Shaman at Explorama Lodge, who gave us an extremely insightful talk on medicinal plants of the ReNuPeRu (renew Peru) Ethnobotanical Medicinal Plant Garden with over 240 species of Amazonian medicinal plants, which are being studied by professors and students here in the U.S., as well as Peru. He gave us many tips on natural healing through plant material such as - putting the sap of the Dragon blood tree on our bug bites to prevent infection and making a drink from natural plants for someone who had a cold.

Staying at Explorama Lodge was an amazing, unforgettable experience.

The lodge generously donates a great deal of time, staff, lodging, boats and equipment for this and other projects. Their staff has been in the forefront of the CONAPAC conservation and education programs. They have also assisted many of the villages in new projects: to bring in revenue such as agouti farms, water filtration systems, a woodworking shop, a bakery; new latrines; teacher workshops and many more.

The Explorama Company has been in business for over 40 years, giving scientists, research students, birders and tourists the ability to see the Amazon up close in a variety of lodge settings. Their knowledge and expertise is unsurpassed. The bird watching is amazing with their trained staff. Over 500 species of birds have been seen in the area. While I was there, we took early morning birding walks with expert Explorama guide, Juan. We saw amazing birds such as the Great Potoo, Tinamou, Horned Screammers, Yellow-headed Caracaras, Plumbeous Kites, Sungrebes, toucans, Scarlet Macaws, Jacanas, trogons, kingfishers, and many others.

Additionally, the food was fantastic, including the piranha served at one of the villages. The Explorama's quest to assist in the education and preservation of the Amazon is admirable.

To continue to save the Amazon rainforest, we will need to enlighten everyone to its plight, especially the children living within its green splendor. If you would like to assist the Adopt-A-School program either by donating to adopt a village or child, or becoming a volunteer to attend the delivery of school supplies, contact Claire Lannoye at the Detroit Zoological society at clannoye@dzs.org or visit the Detroit Zoo's website, www.detroitzoo.org and look up the education and conservation section. Or visit CONAPAC's website at: www.amazon-travel.com/CONAPAC/about.htm Also, if you would like to visit Explorama Lodge in Peru, as a tourist, visit their website at: www.explorama.com Go for an experience of a lifetime. Help the children of the Amazon. You'll never forget it.

TIDBITS FROM THE PAST

By Ellis J. Van Slyck, MD

This brief submission is in response to your request for biographical tidbits from the oldest DAS members listed in the latest FLYWAY. My wife and I became interested in bird identification almost simultaneously in the mid 1960's, when we were about 40 years old. Our property in Grosse Pointe Farms attracted many warblers and other species during spring migration which enhanced and solidified our mutual passion for birding. Trips to Point Pelee and other sites for birds followed. We laugh now at our frustration of frantically passing a small opera glass back and forth in an attempt to find field marks on hyperactive warblers. Not long thereafter we upgraded to each owning serviceable 7 x 35 binocs, and we were "hooked" on birding as our skills improved.

I have no available record as to when we joined the Audubon Society - but my guess would be in the late 1960's. Our volunteer activity for the Detroit Audubon Society has been almost nonexistent, although during the Peregrine Falcon reinstitution program (summer late 1970's), we spent many hours monitoring hacking boxes from atop the Penobscot Building and the Ren Cen.

Over the subsequent 35 years our major leisure activity has been spent in travel to birding sites throughout the USA as well as many foreign countries around the world. Now, in our mid-eighties, poor health has reduced us to arm chair reminiscing, which incidentally, can be a very gratifying way to bring back the happiness this wonderful avocation provides. In our case the source for these memories includes 4000 life birds and 700+ ABA area birds. Examples of a few outstanding birds which come to mind are: Bristle-thighed Curlew after a tough uphill slog off the Kougark road out of Nome; Plains Wanderer at midnight by flashlight in southeast Australia; Ibisbill in dry river bed in northern India; and Brown Kiwi probing seaweed on the moonlit beach at Stewart Island, New Zealand.

FALL CAMPOUT AT POINT PELEE NATIONAL PARK



Do you enjoy watching migrating hawks, eagles, waterfowl, confusing fall warblers and monarch butterflies? Do you enjoy: tent-camping in the midst of fall colors, blue skies and starry cool nights; being warmed at a campfire, whilst sharing stories with other fellow nature lovers? If so, then this year's fall campout at Pt. Pelee National Park is for you! It is scheduled for the week end of October 17 – 19 (2 nights). The cost is \$30 per person, which includes your park entrance fee. Pt. Pelee's group campground includes flush toilets, warm outdoor showers, a sheltered common area, and fire pits with firewood. You must stay in a tent.

Send your check, made out to Michael Fitzpatrick, and mail to him at 56 Hubbard St., Mt. Clemens, MI 48043. Please include the names of all campers since we leave a list at the gate. A confirmation will be sent back to you by return mail. Please be aware that we are limited to 20 participants, so don't delay!

PLEASE E-MAIL US!

If you would like to receive notices about membership meetings, field trips, and other time sensitive material, please send your e-mail address to detas@bignet.net. Simply type the word "subscribe" in the subject line. Please include at least your name in the message area of your e-mail. We will only send out a few e-mails a month and you can ask to be removed at any time. E-mail will help save postage and paper costs -- and will allow us to give you speedy notification of events.

SEVEN PONDS NATURE CENTER'S 32ND ANNUAL

HERITAGE HARVEST DAYS ARTS AND CRAFT SHOW

September 13 and 14

11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Featuring: bluegrass and blues music, arts and crafters, a children's tent, nature walks, sheep shearing, horse drawn wagon rides, garden displays, used book sale and much more. Adults \$6 and Children \$2

**Seven Ponds Nature Center, 3854 Crawford Road,
Dryden, MI 48428 www.sevenponds.org**

SUPPORT WPBO'S 25TH ANNUAL QUILT RAFFLE

Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, a DAS supported, Michigan Audubon affiliate, announces its 25th Annual Fund Raising Raffle. First prize is our traditional queen-sized quilt. This year's quilt features a patchwork of embroidered hummingbirds of North America. 2nd prize is Denali 8 X 42 binoculars, donated by Rosann Kovalcik, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited of Grosse Pte. Woods. 3rd prize is a *National Geographic Field Guide to Birds*.

Drawing date is September 18, 2008. Tickets are \$2 each, or 3/\$5. Please send a check made out to WPBO/MAS in the amount of the number of tickets desired, along with a SASE to facilitate return of your tickets, and mail to Mike Fitzpatrick, 56 Hubbard St., Mt. Clemens, MI 48043.

Thank you for your support. WPBO is a non-profit organization and money raised from this raffle is dedicated to funding the study and conservation of migratory birds.

- continued from Page 1

teach conservation and preservation of the Rainforest. There were many slides of sloths, monkeys, rainforest children, birds and more.

Sunday Morning, Jim Bull successfully led a group near Mio to see the rare Kirtland's Warbler with the U.S. Forest service guides. This again is a popular event on our weekends. Many first timers come back enthralled at seeing one of the rarest warblers in the world right here in Michigan.

Rosemarie led another group on a hike around the camp itself, which has frog and salamander filled ponds and streams, the lake and woods. Some of the younger campers had close encounters with frogs and an exchange student that was visiting held her first snake. We studied the wildflowers and saw the resident Bald Eagle that is also a frequent site in the camp. We viewed the Homer Roberts Nature Building and even looked for the foundations of a house that disappeared long ago on camp property. There were breathtaking views of Indigo Buntings and even small fossils, morel mushrooms and Ruffed Grouse feathers were found.

Jim Bull led a trip to the Rifle River area to view the nesting Bald Eagles, and the flora and fauna of Pintail Pond. This nature area has rare pitcher plants and sundews which are very difficult to find in Michigan. Jim also gave a fantastic tour of all the plant life - varieties of ferns, wildflowers and trees. The lookout tower offered a beautiful view of the surrounding Rifle River where, in the past, Trumpeter Swans have been seen.

After another wonderful dinner, some of the folks read a poem or recited a favorite quote or discussed nature at the celebrate the earth ceremony. Michigan folk singer, Judy Insley, sang a beautiful rendition of her song, Mother Earth, off her new CD.

When the ceremony was over, the entire group gathered for a s'more-filled, bug juice induced campfire, sing-a-long led by Jim Bull and Judy Insley. It was very late when the last sleepy, chocolate filled face headed back to the cabins or lodges to face our last morning at the camp.

Monday began with a flag ceremony honoring our veterans and remembering past Detroit Audubon members who served in the military.

After our last hearty breakfast, we headed out for one last field trip back to the Rifle River for members that had not yet attended and found a rare blue spotted salamander with the full array of other natural splendors.

We said goodbye to our friends, old and new, and all promised to return next year to our favorite camp in Michigan. Mark your calendar next year for a grand Memorial Day adventure at Loon Lake. Don't miss it.



DAS Memorial weekend visiting Lumberman's Monument - photo by Rosemarie Attilio

DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY

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FESTIVAL OF HAWKS

Holiday Beach Conservation Area

September 13 – September 21 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Experts on the Hawk Tower at this globally significant important bird area assist with hawk identification daily. On weekends, attend banding demonstrations, wild hawk releases and talks. Many additional special features during the September 20/21 weekend include workshops and seminars for experts and novices alike, dragonfly hikes, hands-on kid's activities, bird banding and Monarch Butterfly tagging demonstrations. If you miss the main Festival of Hawks, visit on Saturday, September 27 for more special events hosted by the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory. Admission only \$8 per car.

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**Special Year-Long Insert in this Issue:
THE DAS 2008-2009 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE**